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BACKGROUND OF COMPLAINANT BY COUNCIL DISTRICT

The Office of the Independent Police Auditor (IPA) utilizes a Voluntary Questionnaire to request information about the statistical background of the complainants. The purpose of the Voluntary Questionnaire is to gather personal data from the complainant. This information is used to monitor community trends by ethnicity and helps to design IPA services around community needs and expectations. The Voluntary Questionnaire has been in place since 1995 and has been used to track and compare complainant data year to year.

Illustration A: Gender of the Complainant by Council District.

The complainant is asked to respond to seven questions: occupation, educational level, ethnicity, primary language, gender, age range, and how the complainant was referred to either the IPA or the Internal Affairs Unit. In an effort to maximize the collection of data, an effort is made to ask questions about the voluntary questionnaire at the front end of a complainant interview. Because each complaint may have more than one complainant, the total number of questionnaires may be greater than the number of complaints received. In subsequent diagrams, Council Districts are used to indicate the location where an incident occurred and the personal data of the complainant filing the complaint. The unknown/outside City Limits means that the location of the incident could not be identified or did not occur within an acknowledged Council District.

GENDER OF THE COMPLAINANT

Illustration A identifies by Council District, the gender of the complainant for the period of January 1 through December 31, 2000. During the 2000 calendar year there was a total of 423 complainants that filed a complaint. As

noted in Illustration A, there were more male complainants (62%) than female complainants (38%) that filed a complaint. This is a 5% increase in the number of female complainants over the year prior.

ETHNICITY OF THE COMPLAINANT

The ethnicity of the complainant is shown in Appendix L. The data collected is by Council District for the period of January 1 through December 31, 2000. As noted in this appendix, Council Districts 3, 5 & 7 generate the majority of the complaints filed.

Hispanics/Latino filed the most complaints, 160 complaints (38%), a 6% increase over the prior year. European Americans filed 106 complaints (25%) an 8% increase and African Americans filed 55 complaints (13%) a 3% increase over prior year complaints filed.

Because new 2000 Census figures have not been released, as of the writing of this section, 1990 U.S. Census figures were used for this report. Using the old Census figures, the percentage for Hispanic/Latino filing a complaint remains within the represented group living in San José. As in previous

years, the percentage for the European Americans (25%) filing a complaint remains low, even though they make up 43% of the population living in San José. The percentage for African Americans (13%) is high in comparison to the African Americans (4.5%) representation in San José. It should be noted that 52 complainants (12%) decline to answer the Voluntary Questionnaire, making it difficult to determine if an ethnic group listed above may have had more police contacts that resulted in a complaint.

AGE OF THE COMPLAINANT

The age of the complainant is shown in Appendix M. The chart shows the age of the complainants by Council Districts for the period of January 1 through December 31, 2000. As in previous years, complainants between the age of 31–59 and 18–30, filed the majority of complaints. This past year, there was an interesting rise in the number of complainants over 60 years of age that filed complaints. In 1999, this age group filed only 2% or 9 complaints, while this past year they filed 9% or 36 complaints. Staff believes this rise may be attributed to

IPA community outreach efforts that have typically been attended by more senior community members.

EDUCATION LEVEL OF THE COMPLAINANT

Illustration B lists the educational level of complainants by Council Districts for the period of January 1 through December 31, 2000. In this illustration, almost half (41%) of the complainants have received an education beyond the twelfth grade. It's interesting to note that of the total number of complainants filing a complaint, 41% have attended college, with 9% of the total number having attended college for more than four years. The above figures tend to dispel the assumption that most complainants come from the uneducated sector of the community.

COMPLAINANT'S OCCUPATION

The occupation of the complainants is shown in Appendix N. The chart shows the occupation of a complainant for the period of January 1 through December 31, 2000. As noted in the chart most of the complainants are working laborer (24%) such as driver, janitor, etc.;

Illustration B: Education Level of Complainants by Council District

working professional (8%) such as attorney, manager, etc.; working technical (5%) such as engineer, technician, etc.; or student (9%). It should be noted that 69 or 16% of the complainants decline to answer this portion of the Voluntary Questionnaire.